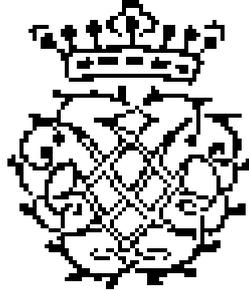


The Bach Society
of Queensland Inc.



Bach Choir Manual

First issued: November, 1995

This issue: October, 2017

The Bach Society of Queensland Inc.

MUSIC DIRECTOR: David Webster dm.webster@uqconnect.edu.au

2017 COMMITTEE

<i>PRESIDENT:</i>	Bronwyn Statham	0414 702 033
<i>VICE PRESIDENT:</i>	Vacant	
<i>SECRETARY:</i>	Bridgitte Te Witi	0431 641 491
<i>TREASURER:</i>	Barbara Haydon	3904 2899
<i>MINUTES SECRETARY:</i>	Vacant	
<i>LIBRARIAN:</i>	Ken Curwen	3389 2950
<i>PUBLICITY OFFICER:</i>	Vacant	
<i>MEMBERSHIP OFFICER:</i>	Patrick Johnson	3399 5426
<i>SOCIAL OFFICER:</i>	Vacant	
<i>WEBMASTER:</i>	Ken Curwen	3389 2950
<i>ORDINARY MEMBERS:</i>	Tina Hewison	3376 5375
	Jim Murray	3395 0396
	Bette Jansen	3286 5768

The official address of *The Bach Society of Queensland Inc.* is:
PO Box 1063,
Kenmore. Q. 4069.

This information will be updated as necessary.

BACH CHOIR MANUAL

HISTORY:

The Bach Society of Queensland Inc. was formed in 1971 at the instance of Nancy Weir, who became the society's distinguished patron. The aims and objects of the society are "to promote and encourage the performance and study chiefly of the work of Johann Sebastian Bach, his family, his contemporaries, and his precursors".

The main arm of the society is the *Bach Choir* which was formed in 1972 as an additional medium for the society's purposes. The choir presents several concerts each year, and in the past, these have included works by J.S. Bach, Vivaldi, Mozart, Scarlatti, Handel, and many other well known composers, as well as lesser known works. These concerts provide a valuable opportunity for young musicians to obtain experience in the performance of Baroque music, and also allow audiences to hear many works seldom performed in Brisbane.

The Constitution of *The Bach Society of Queensland Inc.* was revised in 1997 when the society became incorporated, and a copy will be made available to you upon request.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE SOCIETY:

The affairs of the society are managed by a committee elected from its members at an Annual General Meeting, and committee meetings are held regularly throughout the year. The Music Director is an ex officio member of the committee. You are

encouraged to raise any queries, discuss any problems, and offer any suggestions to any committee member at any time.

FINANCES:

Membership subscriptions, choir and uniform levies are due on 1st February each year. Half-yearly subscriptions are only offered to those who join the society/choir after 1st August. You will have received a current application for membership form with this manual, and this is divided into three parts:

Society subscription: This covers administration, insurance*, Music Director's honorarium, etc. Concessional membership is available to pensioners/Seniors Card holders, students, or additional family members. Members receive regular newsletters, informing them of coming activities, both musical and social, and are entitled to concession prices at all concerts.

Choir levy: This covers the cost of hall hire, purchase or hire of music, Accompanist's honorarium, etc.

Uniform levy: This is to cover the cost of uniforms supplied to choir members for each performance.

*Under the terms of our insurance policy, all choristers are required to be financial prior to performing in any concert. Please approach the Membership Officer if personal circumstances affect your ability to meet these payments.

Choristers perform on a voluntary basis and therefore all revenue raised is used to cover the cost of running the society and the choir. It is therefore vitally important that ALL members undertake to help the society in the following ways:

a. by supporting occasional fund raising activities with their personal attendance and in a financial manner.

b. by selling as many tickets as possible to each of our concerts.

CHOIR MEMBERSHIP:

Membership of the *Bach Choir* is open to financial members of *The Bach Society of Queensland Inc.*, whose admission to the choir will be determined by a voice test given by the Music Director. Successful applicants are required to familiarise themselves with the choir guidelines, as found in this manual.

It should be noted that admission to the choir does not necessarily imply the right to participate in each or any performance.

Note: The Music Director may exercise his prerogative to invite experienced singers to perform in a concert for the purpose of effecting a musical balance between voices. Such invitees are made Temporary Honorary Members of the society/choir and are required to abide by the conductor's directions and the choir guidelines.

REHEARSALS:

Rehearsals are held each Monday from 7.30pm to 9.30pm at the Holy Trinity Anglican Church Hall, 141 Brookes Street, Fortitude Valley.

MUSIC:

Numbered sheet music or scores are issued to each member of the choir by the librarian at the first rehearsal for the next performance. Please keep these in good repair whilst they are in your care. Notations in 2B pencil only may be made in the score, but we ask that these be erased before returning.

If you need to index a location in your music please use Scotch Magic Tape or an adhesive index slip. Standard adhesive tape will tear the music when removed and paperclips (if overlooked) will leave rust marks on the copies during storage.

Practice CDs are sometimes available for those who require them and music folders will normally be issued to choristers prior to a performance. The folders may on occasion need restringing – see Appendix.

All of the above must be returned to the Librarian at the end of each performance.

REHEARSAL COURTESY

Please try to be punctual so that rehearsals/concerts can begin and end on time.

Out of respect for the Music Director and fellow choristers, please refrain from unnecessary talking and loud comments during rehearsals. These make hearing and concentration difficult for some and can detract from the overall enjoyment of rehearsals by everyone.

ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS:

In order to take part in a scheduled performance, it is required that members attend a minimum of 70% of all rehearsals, with special attention to the final rehearsals. Any member who is unable to meet these requirements may only then participate after an audition with the Music Director to demonstrate their ability to sing the work in hand.

New members should be encouraged to join before rehearsals for the next performance have commenced. When more than 40% of rehearsals for that performance have been undergone, joining will be at the Music Director's discretion.

Attendance records are kept by four monitors, one representing each section of the choir. Monitors should be notified of your inability to attend prior to the rehearsal/s or concert to be missed. The contact details of the Monitors are listed in the Contact page on the Bach website www.bachsocqld.org.au. This information is then passed on to the Music Director, so that he knows the expected size of the choir for the coming performance.

For a professional result, full attendance at all rehearsals is desirable, and you are encouraged to attend even if you are unable to participate in the coming performance.

In addition to these set rehearsal times, it is extremely important that each choir member makes time to practice at home. To support this we offer your part on our website; choose Choir → Practice Aids.

Rehearsal Break

During the rehearsal break you may join other members over refreshments; please donate 50c in the honesty jar if you partake. In addition the Bach Bakers group offer home cooked delights and if you choose to enjoy them you should donate a gold coin.

PLATFORM PROCEDURE

Set Up Crew

Half an hour prior to the choir call at final rehearsals and concerts our set-up crew places the choir risers and chairs ready for the choir. Please consider helping in this important activity. You need to be able to carry 6kg into the venue (each riser component weighs 12kg and we share this load) which is equivalent to two supermarket bags of potatoes. Even if you cannot help with this you can still help in placing the chairs. We usually need four rows of ten chairs, two rows of which are on the risers.

Processing

When entering the concert platform, we smile (or at least maintain a pleasant expression), and hold our music at waist height in the hand furthest from the audience. For most venues the processing will be practiced at a final rehearsal but not for the Messiah performances – see details of Messiah at the end of this Manual.

Upon reaching our seat we turn and face the audience. Wait for a pre-arranged signal before being seated.

Found in Place

Move quietly and in an orderly fashion to your place at the appointed time. Do not chat amongst yourselves.

Performance

Stand when the conductor enters the hall.

Further cues for standing and sitting during the performance will be given by the conductor, or will have been arranged during the final rehearsal.

At the end of each chorus we remain standing with our music open and stay still until cued by the conductor to sit. We then sit with our music open on our laps. Do not randomly turn pages, but follow the music as soloists are singing or the orchestra is playing.

At the end of the first half or at the end of the whole performance, we close our music after the final bar has been completed and remain standing.

At the end of the performance, should the conductor return for more applause, we remain standing and only leave, without sitting first, when the applause has subsided, immediately after the departure of the orchestra or accompanist.

If we are to present ourselves in the best possible light, as a choir with a professional standing, and confidence in our ability, all of the foregoing is very important. More points to remember are:

- * Please enter and exit quietly and do not straggle.
- * Please stand and sit up straight.
- * Please stand, sit and turn pages quietly.
- * Please don't wave to anyone in the audience.
- * Please refrain from crossing your legs, particularly if you are seated in the front row
- * Please don't chat amongst yourselves on stage.
- * Please, PLEASE, **PLEASE** keep your eyes *glued* to the CONDUCTOR throughout the performance.

CONCERT DRESS:

LADIES:

Provided by the member:

- * Long black skirt (at least below the knee) or slacks.
- * Black blouse - short sleeves for summer and long sleeves for winter. This must be a definite black and the neckline must be modest. Lace, see-through, and singlet tops are not acceptable.
- * Black shoes and black stockings.

Provided by the society:

- * One coloured stole - small or large.

It is requested that no jewellery be worn with the exception of wedding rings and watches, as the addition of necklaces and earrings will take away from the uniform effect.

MEN:

Provided by the member:

- * Long sleeved white shirt. A definite white is required, no "off-whites" or creams.
- * Black trousers.
- * Black belt, black shoes, black socks.

Provided by the society:

- * One coloured bow-tie - adjustable to fit all sizes.

It is requested that no handkerchiefs or pens etc. be worn in the top pocket, and that no jewellery be worn with the exception of wedding rings and watches.

MEMBERS ARE ASKED TO REFRAIN FROM WEARING STRONG PERFUMES AND AFTER-SHAVES etc. These preparations in close proximity in a choir can affect sufferers of asthma etc, and make singing impossible for some.

Items provided by the society will be given out by the Wardrobe Mistress prior to the performance, and retrieved immediately at the end of the performance.

In order to maintain a professional presentation, it is requested that **strict adherence** be paid to concert dress requirements.

CHRISTMAS CAROL DRESS:

LADIES:

Provided by the member:

- * Street-length white skirt and blouse or dress with short sleeves. A definite white is required, no "off-whites" or creams.
- * White shoes.

Provided by the society:

- * One red tartan sash to be tied on the left hip.

MEN:

Provided by the member:

- * White, short-sleeved shirt. A definite white is required, no "off-whites" or creams.
- * Black trousers.
- * Black belt, black shoes, black socks.

Provided by the society:

- * One green tartan sash to be tied on the left hip.

MESSIAH ARRANGEMENTS

Since we sing Messiah in St John's Cathedral every year most choir members are well acquainted with these arrangements. New choir members should read through them carefully as you will need to be ready to take part.

St John's Layout

There are three red-carpeted steps leading up to the choir stalls level; all numbering hereafter is referred from the nave level.

The orchestra and conductor are at nave level, with some winds and the soloists on the first step. Rows 1 and 2 of the choir are on the second step, row 3 is on the third step, row 4 on the low risers behind them, and row 5 is on high risers fitting between the choir stalls. In order to allow row 2 to see over row 1, row 1 are seated at the edge of the second step and when standing they step down to the first step. If you are not agile enough (or long legged enough) to stand and sit on the edge of the step you should swap places with someone from row 2.

Risers Setup

There are two 'St John Special' risers which are fitted into the gap between the third step and the pulpit – this requires that the cathedral's own carpeted boxes be removed. The non-collapsing riser is at the back and extends the low riser set by about 1 chair. The collapsing riser also adds 1 chair to row 3.

We usually place 8 chairs on the high risers (row 5), 14 for each in rows 4 and 3, and 15 each in rows 2 and 1. IMPORTANT – the cathedral chairs are locked into groups. Although it is not difficult to unlock and relock the chairs visitors are NOT permitted to do so. Ask for staff help if this is needed.

Choir Assembly

Prior to performance the choir assembles in the Darnell room, which is on the left as you exit the North Trancept doors. There are two entrances to this room, and it is up to the Verger which one is going to be used. The room is locked while we are singing, so handbags etc. can be left safely.

Procession

Prior to procession we assemble on the lawn outside the Darnell Room in our rows – thus it is important that you remember with whom you were sitting at rehearsals.

Row 5 lead off and turn right into the Ambulatory (passage between the choir stalls and the Lady Chapel); they then turn back through the choir stalls and make their way onto the high risers.

As soon as row 5 has left rows 4 and 3 follow in crocodile formation, and walk into their rows. Please make sure to move right along the row as there should be no empty chairs (or someone will then have NO chair). Note that we usually leave a couple of spare chairs at the end of the rows just in case....

After rows 4 and 3 have cleared rows 2 and 1 follow likewise. The last choristor in row 1 will signal for the choir to seat themselves.

Recession

Rows 1 and 2 lead off, and at the same time row 5 start their journey through the choir stalls; finally rows 3 and 4 leave the stage.

Return of Music

There will be boxes in the Darnell Room for return of Messiah scores. You will not have time to erase markings, so just leave them for next years choristors to enjoy.



Appendix - Restringing Black Folder

If the elastic has stretched on a Black Folder it can pop out of its retaining comb in use. You should restring the folder as follows:

- Unstring the elastic starting at the bottom right hand corner until you get to the last length on the left hand side which is knotted into the notch beside the bottom left tooth
- With the elastic taut against the comb stretch it by an extra 25mm (1") before slipping it over the top left tooth
- Continue stretching each length of elastic until you reach the hinge (you should be at the bottom comb at this point)
- Take the elastic over the top pin of the hinge and stretch again to fit the first bottom tooth by the hinge on the right hand side
- Continue stringing until you reach the bottom right end of the comb
- Hold the elastic taut and cut it 25mm (1") short of the comb – you will have a few inches of spare elastic

Tie a tight single loop knot on the end and drop it into the last notch on the right – JOB DONE



We do hope that this manual has served to help you feel a determination to practise well, perform well, present well, and above all to ENJOY your membership of the *Bach Choir* and of *The Bach Society of Queensland Inc.*